



An Roinn Talmhaíochta agus Bia
(Department of Agriculture and Food)

BAILE ÁTHA CLIATH 2
(DUBLIN 2)

Ms. S Stratmoen
Acting Director, Equivalence Division
Office of International Affairs
United States Department of Agriculture
Washington D.C.
United States of America

2 January 2003

**Re Draft Final Report of US Food Safety Inspection Service's Audit of the
Republic of Ireland's Meat Inspection System from July 16 through August 1,
2002**

Dear Ms. Stratmoen,

Thank you for your letter of 12th November 2002 and the draft Final Report of US Food Safety Inspection Service's Audit of the Republic of Ireland's Meat Inspection System from July 16 through August 1, 2002.

I am pleased to note the conclusion of the report, which ascertained that product destined for export to the United States from Republic of Ireland, was produced under conditions equivalent to those, which FSIS requires in its domestic establishments.

I am pleased to inform you that all the deficiencies found in the four establishments, which were audited by Dr Urban and which were served with '30 day' notices have been duly corrected. Follow-up inspections by regional superintending veterinary inspectors of this Department confirmed this to be the case. In particular those shortcomings related to incomplete documentation and inadequate implementation of Sanitation Standard Operating Procedures and/or HACCP have been corrected and measures have been taken to prevent their recurrence.

I wish to state that I have been informed that Management of establishment (Approval No. 300), which was delisted during the audit does not intend to reapply to be so reinstated.

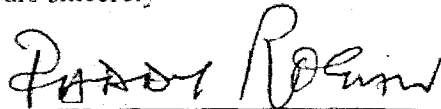
Intra-laboratory check sample programmes, as stipulated by USDA, are now in place in both the Central Meat Control Laboratory and the Pesticides Control Laboratory, which are the two residue testing laboratories visited by Dr Urban. 'Turnaround' times for laboratory results for pesticides and Arsenic are now in conformity with

USDA requirements; this has been achieved through improved organisation and purchase of additional equipment.

I would once again wish to place on the record my own appreciation and that of my colleagues for the manner in which Dr. Urban undertook his audit programme in Ireland. While acting at all times in a most professional manner Dr. Urban went out of his way to be helpful, offering his considerable experience to my colleagues at both regional and local establishment levels.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further information.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Patrick Rogan', written over a horizontal line.

Patrick J. Rogan,
Chief Veterinary Officer